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LAWRENCE S. FREUND/NEW YORK

CARS
(INSERTS IN TAPE LIBRARY)

ANNCR:

AMERICAN CONSUMERS ARE IN THE MIDST OF AN ANNUAL RITUAL -- THEIR FIRST CLOSE-UP INSPECTIONS OF THE LATEST PRODUCTS FROM AMERICAN AND FOREIGN AUTOMOBILE MAKERS. THE NINETEEN SEVENTY-EIGHT AUTOMOBILE SHOW HAS JUST OPENED (1/28 - 2/5) IN NEW YORK, CITY. LARRY FREUND WAS THERE AND FILED THIS REPORT:

NARR:

THE NEW YORK COLISEUM -- THIS CITY'S MAJOR EXHIBIT CENTER -- HAS BEEN TURNED INTO A FOUR-LEVEL PARKING GARAGE FOR A FLEET OF HIGHLY POLISHED LATE MODEL CARS. THIS SHOW -- ONE OF SOME TWO HUNDRED AUTO SHOWS HELD IN CITIES THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES -- IS EXPECTED TO ATTRACT ABOUT HALF A MILLION PEOPLE. CAR DEALERS ARE HOPING FOR BIG CROWDS, SINCE ATTENDANCE RECORDS HERE TEND TO FORECAST AUTO SALES IN THE UNITED STATES: MORE PEOPLE, HIGHER SALES. AUTO INDUSTRY OFFICIALS THINK NINETEEN SEVENTY-EIGHT WILL BE A GOOD YEAR FOR THEM WITH SALES OF DOMESTIC CARS AND IMPORTS PERHAPS REACHING A RECORD ELEVEN POINT EIGHT MILLION.

THOSE INDUSTRY OFFICIALS -- ALREADY CONCERNED WITH A SLUMP IN U-S CAR SALES AT THE END OF LAST YEAR -- WILL BE TAKING A CLOSE LOOK AT CONSUMER REACTION TO THE REDUCED SIZE OF SOME AMERICAN STANDARD MODELS. POTENTIAL CAR BUYERS WILL ALSO HAVE A CHANCE TO SEE THE RESULTS ON CAR DESIGN OF FEDERAL RULES ON POLLUTION AND REGULATIONS THAT CALL FOR INCREASED FUEL EFFICIENCY. THE LIGHTER WEIGHT OF SOME NINETEEN SEVENTY-EIGHT MODEL CARS HAS HELPED IMPROVE THE RECORD FOR GASOLINE USAGE. OLDSMOBILE, PRODUCED BY GENERAL MOTORS, IS DISPLAYING THE FIRST DIESEL FUEL CARS MADE IN THE UNITED STATES AND OFFERED TO THE PUBLIC, FOLLOWING IN THE PATH OF MERCEDES AND PEUGOT IN EUROPE. THE

OLDSMOBILE MODEL IS SEEN AS A TEST OF WHETHER DIESEL FUEL IS A PRACTICAL ANSWER TO DEMANDS FOR FUEL ECONOMY AND LOWER POLLUTION IN FULL-SIZE AMERICAN CARS. THE RANGE OF VEHICLES AT THE NEW YORK AUTO SHOW IS BROADENED THIS YEAR WITH THE ADDITION OF WHAT IS DESCRIBED AS "THE GREATEST COLLECTION OF MOPEDS GATHERED UNDER ONE ROOF." THE TWO WHEELED MOPEDS -- SOMEWHAT LIKE POWERED BICYCLES -- ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY POPULAR IN THE UNITED STATES, IN PART BECAUSE OF THEIR LOW PRICE. AT THE HIGH-PRICED END OF THE VEHICULAR SPECTRUM IS A ROLLS ROYCE CAMARGUE THAT CAN BE YOURS FOR SOMEWHAT OVER ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS.

BUT THIS YEAR -- AS IN EARLIER NEW YORK AUTOMOBILE SHOWS -- THE ATTENTION OF MANY VISITORS TENDS TO FASTEN ON THE EXCALIBUR, A LOW SLUNG AUTOMOBILE BUILT ALONG THE CLASSIC LINES OF A MERCEDES-BENZ SPORTS COMPETITION CAR OF THE NINETEEN TWENTIES. BUT THE EXCALIBUR IS MANUFACTURED NOW BY AN AMERICAN FIRM IN MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, AND SOLD IN THE EASTERN U-S BY THE VINTAGE CAR STORE IN NYACK, NEW YORK AND ITS PRESIDENT ED JURIST.

TAPE: CUT ONE -- JURIST

"IT WAS DESIGNED IN NINETEEN SIXTY-FOUR, PRODUCED IN NINETEEN SIXTY-FIVE AND IT HAS BEEN IN CONSTANT AND SUCCESSFUL PRODUCTION EVER SINCE. THE CAR SOMEWHAT RESEMBLES THE GREAT MERCEDES-BENZ S-S-K'S OF NINETEEN TWENTY-EIGHT AND TWENTY-NINE. YOU NOTICE THAT IT HAS THE EXPOSED EXHAUST STACKS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ENGINE. BUT IT IS CONTEMPORARY IN THAT IT IS POWERED BY A NEW, OF COURSE, CORVETTE ENGINE. AND ALTHOUGH IT STILL LOOKS LIKE AN OLDER CAR, IT NEVERTHELESS HAS ALL THE DESIGN FEATURES OF A CONTEMPORARY CAR."

NARR:

THE EXCALIBUR -- A UNIQUE CAR, SAYS DEALER ED JURIST, WITH SMASHING EYE APPEAL" ... AT THE NEW YORK AUTO SHOW.

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BML/RTD